



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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For More Information, Contact:
Diana Read
Division of Injury Prevention and Control
North Dakota Department of Health
Phone: 701.328.4537
E-mail: dread@nd.gov

Department of Health Urges North Dakotans To Drive Safely This Holiday Season *The Best Gift Is for You and Your Loved Ones To Arrive Safely*

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health is reminding North Dakotans about the importance of safe driving this holiday season, according to Diana Read, Injury/Violence Prevention Program director for the Department of Health. She recommends that you protect your passengers, celebrate safely, and know how much parents matter.

“Too many North Dakotans die as a result of traffic crashes,” said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. “If you travel this holiday season, plan ahead and take some safety precautions. The best gift you can give is for you and your loved ones to arrive safely at your destination.”

The Department of Health offers the following safe driving tips:

1) Protect your passengers.

- Ensure that everyone is buckled up, both in the front and the back. The simple act of wearing your seat belt can reduce your risk of dying in a crash by about half.
- Be sure that children are buckled properly in the back seat in proper child restraints.
- Be aware of changing weather conditions and drive appropriately.
- Avoid distractions when you're driving, like eating or talking on a cell phone.
- Obey the speed limits.

2) Celebrate safely.

- Take steps to make sure that you and everyone you celebrate with avoid driving while under the influence.
- Select a designated driver before the party begins.
- Don't let friends drive if they are impaired. Take away the keys.

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600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: health@nd.gov

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- If hosting a party, remind guests to use a designated driver, offer alcohol-free beverages, call a taxi for your guests and make sure everyone leaves with a sober driver.

3) Know how much parents matter.

- Set the rules of the road, and provide lots of practice on all types of roads.
- Limit your teen's nighttime driving.
- Restrict the number of teen passengers allowed in the car at any one time.
- Always insist on seat belt use from everyone in the vehicle.

"The holidays are a time to celebrate life and family," Read said. "So, remember to drive safely, wear your seat belt, give yourself plenty of time to arrive at your destination, and don't drink and drive."

For more information, call Diana Read, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.4537.

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